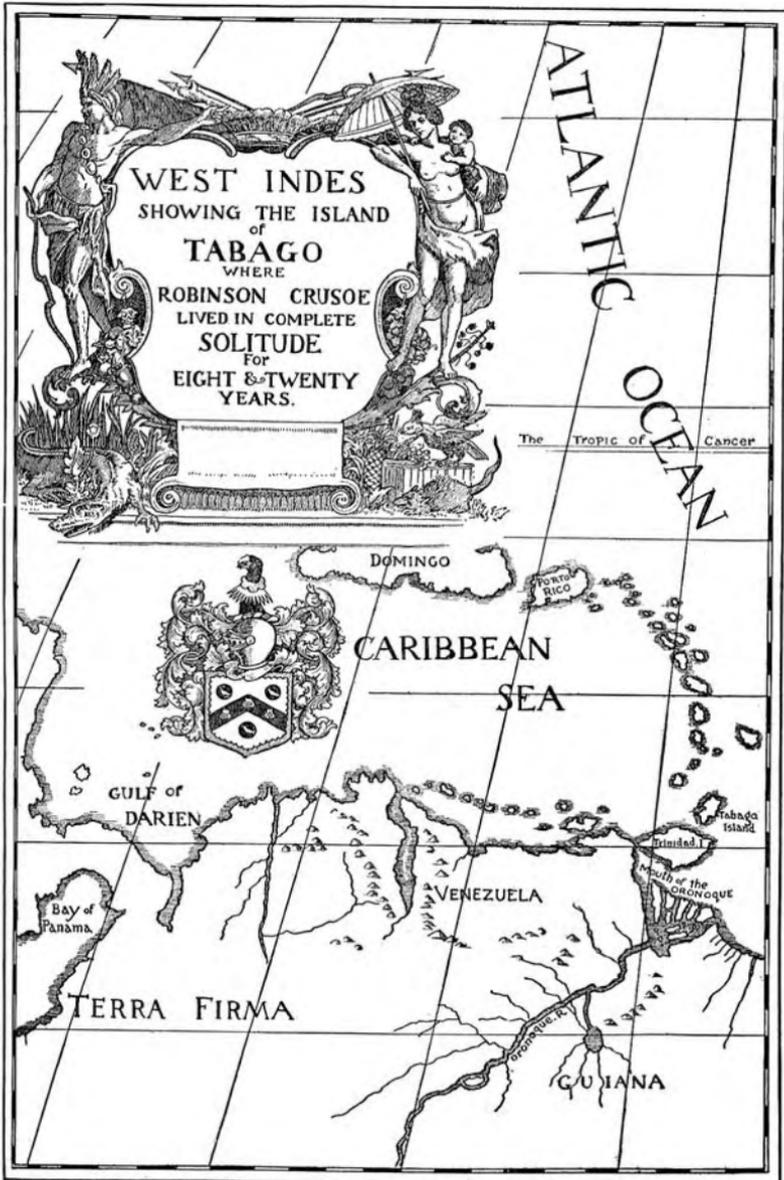




CHAPTER I

The First Voyage

I WAS BORN IN THE YEAR 1632, in the city of York, of a good family. My father was a foreigner from **Bremen**, who got a good fortune as a merchant and, leaving off his trade, lived afterwards at York. There he married my mother, whose relations were named Robinson. For them I was called Robinson



Kreutznaer, but our neighbors pronounced our name Crusoe, and so my companions have always called me.

BREMEN
A port city
on the North
Sea coast of
Germany.

I had two elder brothers. One was killed in battle against the Spaniards. What became of my second brother I never knew, just as my father and mother never knew what became of me.

Being the third son, my head was filled early with rambling thoughts. My father, who was very ancient, intended me to be a lawyer, but I was satisfied with nothing but going to sea. My inclination to this led me strongly against the commands of my father and against all the pleas of my mother and friends. There seemed to be something in my nature that led me directly into a life of misery.

My father, a wise man, gave me excellent advice. He called me one morning into his room and asked me what reasons I had for leaving my home and country, where I had the prospect of raising my fortune and living a life of ease and pleasure. He told me that mine was the middle station in life, which he had found by long experience was the best suited to happiness. This was the state that other people envied, between the low and the



MY FATHER, A WISE MAN, GAVE ME EXCELLENT ADVICE.

high, and that a wise man had said as much when he prayed to have neither **poverty nor riches**.

He said I would always find that the calamities of life are not shared among all men. Temperance, moderation, quietness, and health are the blessings of the middle way. This way men went smoothly and gently through the world, not sold as slaves for daily bread, or enraged by passions of envy or ambition. He urged me very affectionately not to throw myself into miseries I need not suffer.

I was sincerely affected by this talk and resolved to settle at home as my

POVERTY NOR
RICHES

One of the proverbs
of Solomon in the
Bible (Old Testament:
Proverbs 30:8).

father desired. But in a few days it all wore off, and to prevent my father from influencing me, I decided to run away. However, I did not act hastily. I took my mother aside and told her I was determined to see the world, but if she would speak to my father to let me go on one voyage, and I came back and did not like it, I would promise to go no more.

This put my mother in a great passion. She said it would do no good to speak to my father because he would not consent to anything that would hurt me. In short, if I meant to ruin myself, there was no help for me. She reported this to my father, who said with a sigh, "That boy might be happy if he stays home, but if he goes abroad he will be the most miserable wretch that ever was born."

It was not until almost a year later that I broke loose, though in the meantime I continued to argue with my mother and father about their being so against what I wanted to do. One day in Hull, one of my companions who was going to London by sea in his father's ship urged me to go with him. I asked neither my father nor mother, nor even sent them word of it, but left them to hear of it as they might.